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Study Is Reported to Find Congress Was Misled on C.I.A. Angola Role

By SEYMOUR M. HERSH

The Senate Intelligence Committee has concluded, after a secret year-long study, that Henry A. Kissinger and William E. Colby misled Congress about the extent of the Central Intelligence Agency's activities in the 1975 civil war in Angola, according to sources with first-hand knowledge.

The committee's extensive compilation of C.I.A. documents indicated, contrary to various assertions by Mr. Kissinger and Mr. Colby, that more than \$1 million was allocated to recruit mercenaries and that an undetermined number of C.I.A. agents helped train military units inside the former Portuguese colony in West Africa.

In a series of interviews over the last two months, the sources said that the study has triggered a dispute among Senators and committee staff members as to whether Mr. Kissinger, then the Secretary of State, and Mr. Colby, the Director of Central Intelligence at the time, deliberately lied in testimony before Congress.

C.I.A. Officials Furious

In addition, the study has infuriated senior officials of the intelligence agency. They have been urging the committee to modify the study, saying that it is misleading, biased and has "a negative tone."

A senior C.I.A. official, obviously referring to the section of the report dealing with Mr. Kissinger's testimony, com-

plained: "Some people who go back a long way are using this to prove and disprove a point."

"If we did anything," a key Senator said in an interview, "we bent over backwards on objectivity. There are a lot of things that weren't said — it doesn't seek to point any fingers."

He acknowledged that the report, which was sent to the White House and the agency for comment May 17, has so far drawn no official Administration reaction. "We're not going to let it die," he said. "I'm not going to forget about this report."

A Government official said that the Senate study did accuse the C.I.A. specifically of having "misled" Congress in briefings by Mr. Colby and other intelligence agency officials, including James Potts, who was then chief of its African division.

"'Misled' is the key word that got everybody upset," the official said. "The implication was clear that it was done consciously and that's what people in the C.I.A. object to."

In recent weeks, the official said, the agency has turned more documents and files over to the committee in an effort to show that Congress was not misinformed and to force a revision of the study. The official said the agency has been "showing them the dates" on which specific information about C.I.A. activities was forwarded to the Senate Intelligence Committee during the Angolan civil war.

Some Senators and committee staff

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members made it clear in interviews that they believed that the C.I.A. documents already compiled, which include cables direct from Angola, not only contradict the testimony of Mr. Kissinger and Mr. Colby but also indicate that they knew at the time that their testimony was not correct.

Lack of Evidence

The sources said, however, that others on the committee believe there is no evidence available as to whether Mr. Kissinger and Mr. Colby saw those documents or were even aware of the extent of C.I.A. activities in Angola.

"We did not learn how far up the chain of command the documents went," a Senator said.

Another Senator acknowledged that there were deep divisions in the committee. Some, he said, "got all excited" about the staff study. "They thought it was a great, enormous event; that heads would fall; that we'd rig up the guillotine."

"To me," the Senator added, "it's not significant whether somebody does or does not get indicted for perjury. To me, the major element is: 'Why didn't people at the top know?'"

Some Senate staff members were known to believe, however, that President Carter would be obligated to forward the report to the Justice Department to determine whether perjury charges could be sustained.

'We're Waiting'

Asked whether the White House was planning any action, a spokesman for the National Security Council said, "We're waiting for the agency and the committee to sort it out. When there is a formal and finished report with recommendations, then we will consider it."

Some of the Kissinger and Colby testimony challenged by the Senate study apparently was given in closed hearings in late 1975 before the Intelligence Committee, then known as the Church Committee. Mr. Colby also gave dozens of classified briefings on Angola in late 1975 and early 1976 to at least six House and Senate committees.

Mr. Kissinger testified on Angola at least once in public, telling the African Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Jan. 29, 1976, that "the C.I.A. is not involved" in the recruitment of mercenaries for Angola.

Mr. Kissinger went on to say, "It is, of course, possible that in a very indirect way that money has been given" to the pro-Western National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, or Unita, one of the two factions supported by the United States Government.

Allegation on Recruiting

According to one former C.I.A. official, however, the 40 Committee, a high-level group chaired by Mr. Kissinger that approved all covert intelligence activities, authorized \$1.3 million in October 1975, three months before the Kissinger testimony, to aid in the recruitment of Portuguese mercenaries. Mr. Kissinger's testimony on the mercenary issue is known to be discussed in the study.

Another issue raised in the study is testimony in which Mr. Kissinger and Mr. Colby denied that any C.I.A. agents

were acting as military advisers to the C.I.A.-supported factions in Angola.

The sources said that file documents included as an appendix to the study show that at least 12 and possibly as many as 24 C.I.A. agents did help train military units inside Angola.

Another possible discrepancy concerns the extent of the American intelligence agency's cooperation with the South African intelligence service. Sources said that Administration witnesses sought to minimize the link, but that the Intelligence Committee uncovered C.I.A. documents showing that much information was relayed to the South Africans, who also provided support to Unita.

The Kissinger Response

However, Mr. Colby said, "We knew that they were working there, we had some contacts, but it was not a joint operation."

Mr. Kissinger, according to an aide, was "indignant and outraged" about the disclosure of the Senate committee's study and called it "cheap politics."

He was quoted as saying, "Leaks like this are malicious attempts to smear those who were trying to resist the Cubans, the Soviets and the Communists in Angola."

Asked about the specific allegations in the study, the aide quoted Mr. Kissinger as saying that he could not comment on those because he had not seen the document.

In an interview, Mr. Colby characterized differences between his Congressional testimony and the C.I.A. documents as "a matter of perception."

Did Not Read Cables

Told that the committee has obtained copies of the agency's cables indicating that its men were training pro-Western Angolans in the use of arms, Mr. Colby said, "My normal practice was not to read raw traffic."

He noted that the question of what he did or did not know must be put "in the context of what I was spending most of my time doing in 1975," a reference to his repeated testimony in connection with the Senate and House inquiries into intelligence abuses.

The former Director of Central Intelligence, who is now in private law practice in Washington, said that the thrust of his secret Angola briefings was "to show that we were not going to run it as we did in Laos," where the C.I.A. maintained a large force of agents and conducted full-scale military training exercises.

Mr. Colby said, "If some guy did step over the line, it was without my knowledge and I think it was minimal. It really didn't affect the basic thrust of the program."

Many of these discrepancies also were described in a recent book on the Angola civil war, "In Search of Enemies." The author, John Stockwell, who was head of the agency's Angola task force before he resigned last year, wrote that the C.I.A. repeatedly "misled Congressmen about what we were doing in Angola" and gave them "patently false information."

In recent interviews, a number of Senate Intelligence Committee officials took pains to note that its inquiry began well before Mr. Stockwell's revelations.

"We were looking into this long before Stockwell came to us," one Senator said.

"This Angola business came up as part of a routine review. We asked for certain kinds of information and this came up."